

HYE SHARZHOOM Armenian Action ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՍՄ

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

Opinion- Dr. Akçam's April 24 Speech Brings New Perspective



BARLOW DER
MUGRDECHIAN
ADVISOR

Amazing.
Forceful.
Memorable.

Dr. Taner Akçam

These are only a few of the adjectives to describe the unique address given by Dr. Taner Akçam at the Armenian Genocide Commemoration attended by the San Joaquin Valley Armenian community on Saturday, April 24.

This was not the first time an academic has spoken to a Genocide Commemoration audience, but it was the first time in Fresno that the speaker has been Turkish. For many, Dr. Akçam represented the first Turkish person they had ever seen or heard. That a Turkish person would speak to an Armenian group about the Genocide was an amazing moment in the history of the Armenian pursuit of justice.

Dr. Akçam's words penetrated to the heart of Armenian Genocide denial by the Turkish government. "As a citizen of Turkey, I believe that a complete and honest reckoning with the crimes in my country's history, including of

course the Armenian Genocide, is the only way to create true democracy in Turkey and peace and stability in the region," stated Akçam.

Dr. Akçam teaches Genocide at Clark University in Massachusetts and is the author of *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*. He has conducted extensive archival research in documenting the Armenian Genocide.

Turkish state policy is denial of the Genocide, but the reality today is that there are scores of Turks who are defying their own government, to speak openly and truthfully about the Genocide. This can only be a healthy development, and though it may not mean the Turkish state will immediately change its position, it does give hope for change in its position. "...We, the new generation in Turkey, have a moral and political responsibility towards our history and ourselves," said Akçam. "... What you are witnessing now is the rebellion against that suppressed silence, and the expression of the narrative that was never openly

SEE AKÇAM PAGE 6

April 24th-Hundreds Attend Armenian Genocide Commemoration Held at Free Speech Area



Photo: Alain Ekmalian

Students and friends gathered at the Armenian Martyr's Monument after the noon commemoration program.

TAMAR KARKAZIAN
STAFF WRITER

If you ask an Armenian student what they know about the Armenian Genocide, they will most likely give you a brief history. If you ask a random student on the Fresno State campus the same question, the chances that they would know something about the Genocide would be very low.

The members of the Armenian Students Organization didn't

like that level of knowledge and wanted to raise the awareness of the Genocide among their peers. To do so they organized various activities on campus to spread the word. They hoped that by having various informational events, the Fresno State community would become more aware of the Genocide.

The ASO's Annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration took place at noon on Friday, April 23 in the Free Speech Area. This

ASP 22nd Annual Banquet Honors Scholarship Recipients and Screens Premiere of Saroyan Film



Armenian Studies Program scholarship recipients at the ASP 22nd Annual Banquet held at Fort Washington.

TAMAR KARKAZIAN
STAFF WRITER

If one were present at the Fort Washington Golf and Country Club Banquet Hall on March 29, 2010, they would have found their eyes scanning over a crowd of 200 students, parents, professors, and members of the Armenian community all dressed in fitted suits, tailored pants, and detailed dresses. They were gathered for the Armenian Studies Program 22nd Annual Banquet. Their ears would ring from the murmur

Photo: Joseph Vasquez

of excitement escaping the lips of students, as they exchange acknowledgments and questions. "What would the night entail? Was the movie supposed to be good? What about the food?" By the end of the night the students would realize that all their concerns were gone and replaced with a sense of relief and gratitude. "I really enjoyed the Banquet," exclaimed ASO President Faten Myaznih-Kassabian, "It was a great experience." Everything went well and students enjoyed themselves. The food was delicious. The

movie was interesting. And apart from the slight stage fright experienced by students who were acknowledged as scholarship recipients, the Armenian Studies Annual Banquet was a success.

Like most Armenian events, the Banquet started off with dinner: a freshly tossed salad, creamy chicken piccata, vegetables, mashed potatoes, and a rich, chocolate-cheesecake for dessert. As guests were finishing dessert and drinking coffee, the evening began with introductions and remarks by Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program. He briefly described the success of the Program, stating such incredible facts as the recent increase in the average number of students taking Armenian classes, with an average now of 32 students per class. He also mentioned how Armenian courses have been taught at Fresno State for over 40 years, since the late 1960s.

Prof. Sergio La Porta, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State, spoke about the highlights of his first year teaching in the Program.

SEE ASP BANQUET PAGE 7

Terian Continues Lecture Series on Genocide and Literature

EVELYN DEMIRCHIAN
STAFF WRITER

On Thursday, March 11, the Armenian Studies Program's Eighth Kazan Visiting Professor, Dr. Abraham Terian, gave an in-depth lecture on the subject of early literary responses to the Armenian Genocide.

First responses of those who lived through the Genocide were written accounts of their experiences. Most of these were

detailed and drawn straight from the fresh memories of the survivors and witnesses of the Genocide.

According to Dr. Terian, "Any memoir by an Armenian survivor is a monumental work."

One such example would be Bishop Grigoris Balakian's memoir, *Armenian Golgotha*. Balakian was arrested on April 24, 1915 and his work vividly explains how there existed an

SEE TERIAN PAGE 6



Photo: Erica Magarian

L. to R.: Dr. Sergio La Porta, Dr. Abraham Terian, ASP Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

SEE APRIL 24 PAGE 8

Armenian Studies Program Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Prof. Sergio La Porta, and the Armenian Studies Program would like to thank the donors, authors, and publishers for the following books, periodicals, videos, and archival gifts, either offered personally, or to the Program.

Gaylee M. Amend, Fresno, for the gift of eighteen books by William Saroyan, many of them first editions, and for a framed set of Saroyan photographs, in memory of Ted Markarian. The books are from the collection of her late husband, Alan Amend.

Grigoris Balakian, *Armenian Golgotha: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide, 1915-1918*, tr. Peter Balakian with Aris Sevag (Vintage Books: New York, 2009). The book is a memoir of Bishop Grigoris Balakian, who was arrested on April 24, 1915, along with around 250 other Armenian intellectuals, clerics, and political figures at the outset of the Armenian Genocide. His account of the tortures, deportations, and deprivations of the Armenians is an important witness to the horrors of the Armenian genocide as well as to the strength of the human spirit.

Sara Chitjian, Los Angeles, for the gift of *Yerevan Magazine*, volumes 1-8.

Dr. Sarkis Khantarian, Yerevan, Armenia, for the gift of his new book, *The Fate of an Armenian: The Story of One Family* (Yerevan: Hayakitak, 2008). The book is about one family's travails surviving the Armenian Genocide.

Haig Aram Krikorian, Sherman Oaks, California, for the gift of his new book, *Lives and Times of the Armenian Patriarchs of Jerusalem* (2009). This 821 page tome is a comprehensive history of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, as told through the tenures of the Armenian Patriarchs of Jerusalem. The book is full of interesting information about the history of the Armenians in Jerusalem.

S. M. Terzian, a gift by the author of their book, *Gathered Words* (Ethnic Press: Reno, Nevada, 2009). Written by a California native, this novel tackles broader issues of the Armenian genocide, self-identity, and love within the context of the discovery of cultural artifacts by an American born Armenian photographer and her former lover, a Turkish professor.

Ruth Thomasian, Project Save, Armenian Photograph Archives, Inc., Watertown, MA, for the gift of the Project Save 2010 Calendar and articles by Ruth Thomasian in *The New England Journal of Photographic History*.

Martin M. Tourigian, Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, for the gift of two water-color paintings and the January 2010 issue of *Hask*.

● Armenians on the Internet ●

PATEEL MEKHITARIAN
EDITOR

Armenian American Cultural Association
www.aacainc.org

The mission of the Armenian American Cultural Association (AACA) is "to promote cultural, educational, and scientific endeavors between the United States and the Republic of Armenia and to sponsor health and humanitarian projects for the people of Armenia."

The Arlington, Virginia-based AACA is the United States sponsor of the Armenian American Wellness Center in Yerevan, Armenia, which provides women's healthcare using Western standards and technology.

The Armenian American Cultural Association, Inc. (AACA) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization established in February 1995. AACA was founded to foster greater understanding and to strengthen cultural ties between the people of the newly independent Republic of Armenia and the United States through cultural, educational, and scientific exchanges and humanitarian projects.

Since 1996, the primary focus of AACA's efforts has been directed toward its humanitarian project in Armenia, the Armenian American Wellness Center. The Wellness Center is dedicated to saving, prolonging, and improving the lives of women through the early and accurate detection of breast and cervical cancer and to providing primary health care services to ensure the good health and well-being of women, children and men in Armenia.

California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program

Fall 2010 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education				
Arts & Humanities, Area C1				
• ArmS 20 Arts of Armenia (Class #73231)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
Arts & Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1A Elementary Armenian (Class #72097)	4	10:30A-11:35A	MWFB	Der Mugrdechian
• Hum 11 Hum Baroque/Mod (Class #72687)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	S La Porta
Arts & Humanities, Area IC				
• Arm 148 Masterp. Arm Culture (Class #73306)	3	10:00A-10:50A	MWF	S La Porta
• Arm 148 Masterp. Arm Culture (Class #75709)	3	1:00P-1:50P	MWF	S La Porta
Social Studies, Area D3				
• ArmS 10 Intro Arm Studies (Class #72098)	3	11:00A-11:50A	MWF	S La Porta
Upper Division Armenian Studies Courses				
• ArmS 108A Arm History I (Class #72099)	3	9:00A-9:50A	MWF	B Der Mugrdechian

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669
or visit our offices in the Peters Business Building, Room 384.

Get a Minor in Armenian Studies. Check on requirements
for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the 2009-2010 catalog:
<http://www.csufresno.edu/catoffice/current/armstudhd.html>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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Dr. Sergio La Porta in Three Valley Speaking Engagements in April

STAFF REPORT

This month, Dr. La Porta gave a series of talks to local and regional groups on Armenian topics. On April 13, he spoke at the annual dinner in commemoration of Armenian Martyr's month for the First Armenian Presbyterian Church Men's fellowship. He spoke about the significance of martyrdom in the early Armenian Church. He drew attention to the stories of St. Thaddeus and St. Sandukht, noting that the changes made in the Armenian version of the life of St. Thaddeus in which he is martyred in Armenia bring into relief the importance of such acts for early Armenian Christians. He also suggested that the imprisonment of St. Gregory the Illuminator represents a symbolic martyrdom. Gregory's torture, imprisonment, and release from Khor Virap, according to Dr. La Porta, imitates Christ's torture, crucifixion, descent into the underworld, and ascent. Like

Christ, he added, Gregory returns more triumphantly than he entered: "he was thrown into the pit for being a recalcitrant member of King Trdat's secretariat, but he returns as Trdat's healer and Armenia's savior."

Dr. La Porta's next lecture took place on April 18 at the AGBU's annual luncheon held at the St. Paul Armenian Church Berberian Hall, where he lectured on the Armenian presence in Jerusalem and Jerusalem in the Armenian imagination. He highlighted the long historical contact Armenians have had with Jerusalem from the fourth century until the present day. He drew attention to the spiritual attraction Jerusalem held for Armenians as a place of pilgrimage as well as a center of scribal and theological activity. He also discussed the present status of the Armenian population of Jerusalem and took the audience on a "virtual tour" of the Armenian Quarter of the Old City and of Armenian sites in the



Photo: Edward Ashjian
Phil Tavlian left, with Prof. Sergio La Porta.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Finally, on April 27, Dr. La Porta lectured at Sonoma State University as part of their 27th Annual Holocaust and Genocide Lecture Series. In addition to presenting the historical context of the Armenian Genocide and its execution, he pointed out the incredible relief efforts launched by the United States during and immediately after the

Genocide. He observed, however, that such efforts were quickly forgotten as American political interests replaced her prior moral commitments. Dr. La Porta also indicated the contemporary geopolitical relevance of the Armenian Genocide and its recognition, and its importance in our understanding of other genocides and for the prevention of future genocide. He cautioned,

however, that the use of Genocide recognition as a political weapon to punish or reward the Republic of Turkey is a dangerous tactic as it undermines both the moral and legal status of genocide. He further added that it has been precisely the use of Genocide recognition as such a tool that has correctly raised suspicions among diasporan Armenians with regards to the creation of a historical commission to investigate the tragic events of 1915. If, Dr. La Porta argued, the very recognition of the Armenian Genocide as genocide is capable of being bartered in order to further the political aims of particular interests, then what assurance can there be for an "apolitical" historical commission created within the very same framework?

Dr. La Porta's next public lecture will take place on May 7 at the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School on the topic of "How and Why the Armenian People have survived."

LA Rock Band Armenian Space Station Creating Music Interest

EVELYN DEMIRCHIAN
STAFF WRITER



A relatively new rock band has been creating some major underground waves in Southern California this past year. *Armenian Space Station*, headed up by friends Greg Hosharian and Barrett Yeretsian, with Phil Trujeque and Clint Feddersen, is a hard rock group that takes an interesting twist on metal by combining classical music and Armenian melodies.

Hosharian (piano) and Yeretsian (drums), already established and talented performers in their own right, were looking to do a joint project focusing on video game and television music when they had the idea that their songs could become performance pieces as part of an instrumental group. In early fall of 2009, they added on Trujeque (guitar) and Feddersen (bass) to complete the band.

I caught up with Hosharian and Yeretsian the day after their sold-out performance at The Roxy Theatre in Los Angeles, on April 10, 2010. Co-headlining with *West-Indian Girl*, *Armenian Space Station* played their 4-song set and blew away a crowd of rock fans, curious newcomers, friends, and members of their underground street team. The group was still on a high from their show the previous night when we met up at a Burbank coffee shop to discuss their backgrounds and the history of the band.

Hosharian was trained on classical piano and has his Masters Degree from Cal. State University, Northridge. Yeretsian has been playing drums for nearly 20 years, since he picked up the *duhol* (Armenian hand drum) at the age of 12. Both are industry professionals who have worked as producers and have been in various other bands in the LA-area.

Armenian Space Station, that's a very interesting name, where

did you guys get the idea for it?

Hosharian: We had to think up of a name, and when we were tossing around ideas we started playing around with Armenian... and it just sort of came out of nowhere and stuck.

Yeretsian: It just sounded funny...because really when would a tiny country like Armenia have its own space station? It was just ironic, sounded good and there we had it!

When was your first performance as a group? Have you been touring?

Yeretsian: October 28, 2009 at Yerevan's Sunchild Festival. It's this environmental gathering promoting green technology.... Our first and only performance before The Roxy last night.

No way, how did that go? And how has your fan base grown so large since then?

Hosharian: It was great. There were over 1,000 people in the crowd.

Yeretsian: Much thanks goes out to our street team leader, Ani (Khodaverdian), who's really promoted our band and helped get our name out there.

Would you be interested in touring through Fresno?

Hosharian: Yes! I have family there and I've visited before, I like it. If there's a venue that'll support us we'll be there!

Yeretsian: I have cousins in Fresno, and I think we'd really like to come through.

Hosharian: It could be part of a Californian tour, from LA to Fresno to San Francisco.

Author Bobelian Presents Fascinating Discussion on the History of Genocide Recognition in the U. S.

MARI KOSHKAKARYAN
STAFF WRITER

Imagine roaming through the streets of your hometown that once was a bright place, where you enjoyed an outing with your family, returning one day to see nothing but destruction, and encountering the corpses of your own family members, whose lives were unjustly taken away along with the lives of 1.5 million others during the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

On Wednesday, April 21, the Armenian Studies Program welcomed guest speaker Michael Bobelian, who came to Fresno State to deliver an informative lecture on the "Forgotten Genocide" of the Armenians and the struggle for recognition. Bobelian graduated from the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, and pursued a successful career in law, journalism, before gaining recognition as an author. As the grandson of Genocide survivors, he takes great pride in speaking about the struggle for the world's acknowledgement of the Genocide, thus his efforts to speak on campuses across the United States.

Bobelian introduced his topic by reading from an introductory paragraph from his book *Children of Armenia: The Forgotten Genocide and the Century-long Struggle for Justice*. The excerpt was on the life of Kourken Yanikian, who gained notoriety in 1973 by slaying two Turkish diplomats in Santa Barbara, in revenge for the personal tragedy he encountered, when he discovered the Ottoman Turks had murdered

For now, *Armenian Space Station* is working on songs for a new record and they are looking for new venues to play. You can find their self-titled album online at www.armenianspacestation.com as well look them up on Facebook and Twitter.



Photo: Erica Magarian
Michael Bobelian

most of his family.

Although the Genocide was widely known when it took place, after a couple of decades it was nearly forgotten. During 1915, major magazines covered the incident with graphic headlines of the atrocities. Due to the media coverage, Armenia became one of the first beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance. The United State alone sent over \$100 million dollars of aid (worth about \$1 billion nowadays) to help the Armenians.

In 1965, in cities such as Fresno, Los Angeles, New York, Boston, and Beirut, Armenians held rallies for the first time to publicly commemorate the Genocide. In Yerevan, hundreds of thousands marched to demand the Turkey's acknowledgement. Because they lived in the Soviet Union, it is important to consider that these who participated in these rallies were risking their livelihood and possibly imprisonment, but the effort was worth the risk.

As Armenians began to voice their opinions, Turkey began

its campaign of public denial. Beginning in 1983, Armenian advocates in Washington, D.C., lobbied the Congress to pass a resolution that would recognize the Genocide. Later, in 1990, Senator Bob Dole became a leading advocate of passing a Genocide resolution, though it faced opposition from the Bush administration.

Bobelian emphasized early in his lecture that the Armenians had been afraid to show their agony—they felt more comfortable keeping silent, but as they began to see that memory of the Genocide was fading, they knew it was time to stand up and fight for recognition.

Bobelian ended his lecture by discussing the cover photograph of his book, depicting the Marootian family. Although many in the family died long ago, their souls are not at rest and will not be until the Genocide is recognized.

Children of Armenia can be purchased in bookstores around the country.

Hye Oozh - Saturdays 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
90.7 FM-KFSR

Hye Oozh is 90.7 KFSR's weekly program dedicated to contemporary and traditional Armenian music and culture.

Current Hye Oozh DJs:

Tatevik Ekejian • Vartush Mesropyan • Marine Vardanyan

Graduating Seniors 2010

Name: Pateel Mekhitarian
Major: Chemistry
Minor: Armenian Studies
Honors



What on-campus Armenian activities were you involved in?

I served as Treasurer for ASO for two years and at the same time I was a staff writer for Hye Sharzhoom. Starting my junior year, I became the editor of Hye Sharzhoom, and continue until now. I believe students at Fresno State are very fortunate to have such a strong Armenian Studies Program, with many opportunities to get involved.

How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

Completing a Minor in Armenian Studies was important to me. Although I already read, speak, and write the language, I greatly enjoyed taking the language and history courses. The Armenian culture is very complex and unique, and it was very beneficial for me to fully comprehend our culture. My involvement in the Program amplified my experiences at Fresno State, and made me very involved with Armenian related events within our community.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

I thoroughly enjoyed all of the courses, however my most memorable course was physically traveling to Armenia with Prof. Der Mugrdechian and a group of Fresno State students. I am very thankful to have had this experience, especially since I took the trip with my sister. It was my first time visiting my homeland, in the summer of 2007, and therefore it was a very special experience.

What did you enjoy most about your experience at Fresno State?

Being a scholar in the Smittcamp Family Honors College and earning a Minor in Armenian Studies have both been the most meaningful aspects of my college years. I feel very blessed to have had such positive and inspirational opportunities provided to me.

What are your plans for after graduation?

After graduation, I will attend pharmacy school in Fall 2010. Working in the pharmacy field these past four years has provided me full appreciation of the field. I also plan on continuing my involvement within the Armenian community.



Name: Arthur G. Petrosyan
Major: Business Management
(Organizational Leadership)

What on-campus Armenian activities were you involved in?

I have taken a few Armenian Studies courses: Armenian 1A/1B (Elementary Armenian), Armenian Studies 20 (Arts of Armenia), and Armenian 148 (Masterpieces of Armenian Culture). I was also involved with the Armenian Students Organization.

How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

Being involved with the Armenian Studies Program has benefited me in many ways. One way is through my education; I learned from knowledgeable professors. The information I've obtained from my classes will be something I will use for future reference and never forget.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

My favorite Armenian Studies class was Armenian Studies 20. Learning about my culture's artwork was incredibly interesting because it fashioned the future for the Armenian people. Analyzing specific visual works of art of the Armenian culture made me greatly appreciate the influence of the past.

What did you enjoy most about your experience at Fresno State?

What I enjoyed most about my experience at Fresno State was meeting and interacting with countless new people. This opportunity opened many doors for beneficial networking and also gaining life-long friends.

What are your plans for after graduation?

I plan to pursue my MBA and also work for the family business—in the auto collision repair industry.

Photos: Randy Vaughn-Dotta

Antonyan Completes Successful Semester

PATEEL MEKHITARIAN
EDITOR

The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State was pleased to welcome Junior Fulbright Scholar Dr. Kristine Antonyan for the spring semester. Unfortunately, Antonyan's visit at Fresno State is quickly coming to an end, as she is returning as planned to Armenia in early May. Looking back, Antonyan shares many memorable experiences that she had at Fresno State. Antonyan graduated from Yerevan State University with a concentration in Economics and soon after, her strong interest in the field led her to pursue her Ph.D in Economics.

Throughout her stay, Antonyan became involved in many activities. She gave presentations in numerous classes concerning economies in transition and the transformation of European education. Antonyan also sat in on many courses to gain ideas on how to enhance her teaching methods. The driving purpose for her interest was to be able to take back educationally beneficial information to better the courses she teaches at Yerevan State University.

When asked what her main accomplishments were during the semester, Antonyan replied, "I was able to get acquainted with so many Armenians living in Fresno. I have always had a dream to see how much Armenians are united, and how they live and act in different communities in different countries. I managed not only to see, but to be involved in the Fresno Armenian community life." With such fond memories of the Armenian community, Antonyan plans to collaborate



L: to R. : Tom Burns, Dr. Kristine Antonyan, Emil Milevoj, and Dr. Bill Eryisian discussing plans for MBA program.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

with the Armenian Studies Program in the near future on upcoming projects.

One of Antonyan's major goals when arriving to the campus was to have an open mind on different teaching styles. "I will organize my classes with more 'student-centered' methodology, rather than 'course-centered,'" she said. "I will try to make my students do more individual and group projects, develop presentation skills, think more openly and express their point of view, and organize more round tables and debates. I believe that the free conversations may create new knowledge and allow students to learn better. Also, I will try to extend the usage of the new technologies in my teaching."

Antonyan is very thankful for the many opportunities provided to her while at Fresno State. She sincerely wants to thank Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian for the determinative role he carries in the Program. She

appreciates the measures that are taken to connect the Armenians from Armenia to the Armenians abroad. When asked for her final thoughts, she said, "If I compare the Armenian community and the activities it implements with what I have seen in other countries, I can say that for the first time ever in my life, being abroad Armenia, in another country, I really have been very proud to say 'I am Armenian.' That is thanks to you, my countrymen, thanks to the reputation that you had been creating around our nation in this city and in this country. Thanks to you, Armenians are known as hard-working, smart, intelligent, kind people, with a national and cultural rich heritage. I am leaving back to Armenia filled with positive impressions, hope, and a love of Fresno."

The Armenian Studies Program is appreciative of Dr. Antonyan's contributions to the university and looks forward to hosting more Fellows in the future.

Fresno State Kicks Off Centennial Year Celebration in April-Activities to 2011



Students, faculty, and staff gathered to form the number 100. Photo: Randy Vaughn-Dotta

STAFF REPORT

The Armenian Studies Program will be joining the College of Arts and Humanities for the Fresno State's centennial celebration, slated to begin in April 2010 and culminating with commencement in May 2011.

The history and programs of the College of Arts and Humanities will be highlighted in October 2010. The Henry Madden Library will be at the center of the celebration, with displays and history of the ten departments that comprise the College.

The Armenian Studies Program is planning several important

events during the centennial year, culminating with a gala banquet on March 20, 2011.

Fresno State alumni will be asked to join in the celebration.

California State University, Fresno launched its Centennial celebration on Friday, April 16, with a proclamation and then with hundreds of students, staff, faculty, alumni and future alumni forgoing lunch to gather in the campus amphitheater for a birthday photo opportunity.

The festivities are an invitation to the community and alumni to return to campus during the 13 months until the 100th Commencement in May

2011 to celebrate at one of numerous events planned for the Centennial.

Fresno State was established in 1911 as the Fresno State Normal School, a teacher's college. In 1935, by act of the Legislature, the official designation became Fresno State College. Between 1953 and 1958 the college was moved from the old campus site, by then surrounded by the city of Fresno, to a 1,410-acre site six miles to the northeast. In 1972, the state college system became The California State University and Colleges, and in 1982 the system was renamed The California State University.

Scholars Der Matossian and Marashlian Speak at Fresno State

ARMEN MELIDONIAN

STAFF WRITER

The Fresno State campus welcomed a joint lecture by two professors on April 16 at 7:30 pm at the University Business Center. Attendees were treated to presentations by Dr. Bedross Der Matossian, professor of Middle East History at MIT, and Dr. Levon Marashlian, professor of History at Glendale Community College.

The event was organized and sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program in commemoration of the 95th Anniversary of the Genocide.

ASP Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian introduced the speakers, emphasizing the important work being done by scholars in furthering knowledge of the Genocide.

Dr. Bedross Der Matossian opened the evening with a talk on "The Taboo Within the Taboo: The Fate of the 'Armenian Capital' in the End of the Ottoman Empire." He discussed the economic aspect of the Armenian Genocide and the fate of the 'Armenian capital,' an area of the Genocide's impact on Armenians and Turkey that needs more research. He pointed out that modern Turkish scholars frequently confront a second taboo in referring to the fate of the 'Armenian capital' in Turkey, even among the more liberal Turkish scholars. Two main issues were brought up: Armenians' contribution to Turkey as industrialists had come to have an established place in the Turkish economy and the legality of the confiscations of Armenian homes and property by Turkish officials.

The economic elimination of the Armenians in Turkey

began with the Hamidian era, 1876 to 1908, when the 1895-1896 Hamidian massacres led to 200,000 Armenians being killed throughout the Empire. When nationalists began protesting against the government's oppressive policies towards minorities, there was some hope for the Armenians, but it ended in 1909, as 20-30,000 Armenians died in the Adana massacres, the cotton production center of the Ottoman Empire.

There is a clear continuity between the policy of the Ottoman Empire and that of Turkey. During wartime, supplementary laws were created to justify policies of confiscation. A June 10, 1915 law composed of 34 articles concerned confiscation of Armenian property on the premise that the property would be returned, but the law contradicted itself by also stating that the property would be given to the "muhajirs," Turkish immigrants fleeing the Baltic wars. The comprehensive records of the Abandoned Property Commission on those deported have served as evidence of "population engineering."

Legislation passed in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide aimed to prevent claims on land, such as the Treaty of Lausanne in 1927, which intended to make it impossible for Armenians to claim property. Dr. Der Matossian posed the question: "Why do you need to use law or legality to confiscate?" He emphasizes that we need comparative studies to understand the process and ramifications of this kind of policy and legislation because it has occurred numerous times in world events afterwards, such as the systematic bureaucratic confiscation in Germany of Jewish property. From 1948 to



Photo: Erica Magarian
L: to R. Dr. Levon Marashlian, Dr. Sergio La Porta, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and Dr. Bedross Der Matossian.

1950, the Israeli government passed laws on confiscating abandoned property by the Palestinians. Israel's legislation was influenced by the laws passed in the aftermath of the partition of India to confiscate and deal with abandoned property, when 14 million Hindus and Muslims passed the India-Pakistan border and 1 million died as a result of the partition. Pakistan itself was influenced by British policy on taking enemy property during WWII.

Dr. Levon Marashlian gave the second lecture of the evening, "Problems with Denial and Denying with the Armenian-Turkish Protocols." Dr. Marashlian characterized Turkey's problem with Armenian Genocide resolutions passed around the world as a national security issue, pointing out that if it's not so, "why is Turkey so concerned?" Armenians have been recently unsuccessful at getting recognition of the Armenian Genocide in the United States Congress.

Video clips accompanied Dr. Marashlian's presentation, showing how, whenever there's a

resolution discussed or passed in foreign governments, discussion and debate in the Turkish media over the Armenian Genocide "skyrockets." Video clips from Turkish news when France passed a resolution in 2001 showed street protestors throwing eggs at the French embassy in Turkey, burning French flags, and calling for the boycott of French goods.

When Turkey began to make important steps toward getting entrance into the EU a couple of years ago, Armenians from various countries of Europe protested and even though Genocide recognition was not a pre-condition for entrance, European nations like Austria and France emphasized it and it became a discussion point in Turkish media. Dr. Marashlian notes that all this attention educates the Turkish public.

A documentary film argued against the existence of a quote from an interview with Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in *The Los Angeles Examiner* in August 1926, the founder of modern Turkey, where he acknowledged that the Young Turks should be held accountable for "the millions of

our Christian subjects who were ruthlessly driven en masse, from their homes and massacred." Although Dr. Marashlian was interviewed for the documentary, his own video compared against the documentary clip showed that the filmmaker cut off his point that if that portion of *The Los Angeles Examiner's* interview was fake, why didn't the Turkish government send a letter to the editor of the *Examiner* testifying that Ataturk never said it?

Dr. Marashlian discussed the protocols that Turkey initiated with Armenia to begin normalization and establish a historical commission to review the events of 1915. When Turkey's current prime minister Erdogan sent a letter to then-president of the Republic of Armenia Robert Kocharian, it was rejected, noting that "this was a desperate act" of a losing government and the current president of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan "walked right into this trap." Dr. Marashlian stated that the purpose of the protocols was to deflect attention from recognition of the Genocide because when foreign governments see the recent progress on the protocols as evidence that Turkey and Armenia are trying to reconcile their past, they are influenced against recognizing the Genocide. For example, while Armenian Genocide resolutions in the House Foreign Affairs Committee had passed by very wide margins twice in the past decade, it passed by a margin of one vote in March this year.

Dr. Marashlian thinks that President Sargsyan has probably realized signing the protocols was a mistake in regard to international recognition.

CineCulture Features "Saroyan's Will"

STAFF REPORT

The CineCulture film series featured a new movie on William Saroyan on Friday, March 26, as part of its Spring 2010 schedule of screenings. Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian introduced "Saroyan's Will" to an audience composed of CineCulture class students and community members.

CineCulture instructor Mary Husain has included films on Armenians as a regular part of the course.

In 2008, Armenians in Fresno and in Armenia, as well as throughout the world, celebrated the 100th anniversary of the birth of William Saroyan. In Armenia, the Ministry of Culture commissioned the creation of a film to mark Saroyan's centenary.

Director Grigor Harutyunyan came to Fresno in 2008 to visit the places in Fresno where Saroyan lived and worked and to interview those who knew him well. The result of Harutyunyan's and co-screenwriter Ruben Gevorgyants' efforts is "Saroyan's Will."

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, former director of the Armenian Studies



The newly-erected statue of William Saroyan standing in the center of Yerevan, Armenia.

The statue was created by sculptor David Yerevantsi.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Program, was interviewed in the movie about Saroyan's will and how Saroyan's final wishes were executed. The William Saroyan Foundation was established to manage Saroyan's legacy.

Saroyan and Fresno are intimately tied to each other and the unique vision of this film brings new insight into that relationship, and also a different perspective of Saroyan himself. Footage from some of Saroyan's visits to Armenia, plus rare archival footage brought an added

excitement to the film.

Following the screening, Prof. Der Mugrdechian fielded questions from the audience. Interesting questions were raised about Saroyan and his experiences.

CineCulture is a film series provided as a service to the Fresno State campus students, faculty, and staff, and community, at no charge. CineCulture is also offered as a three unit academic course in the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism.

ASO Spring Activities



The ASO set up a table in the Free Speech area the week of April 19-23. L. to R.: Heidi Lea, Tamar Karkazian, Vartush Mesropyan, and Faten Myaznih-Kassabian.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

ARMEN MELIDONIAN

STAFF WRITER

The Armenians Students Organization (ASO) has had a productive semester, with preparation and planning for activities and events.

In March ASO held a fundraiser at Me 'N Ed's Pizza on First and Bullard Avenues. The pizza fundraiser was beneficial in assisting the club's funding of numerous activities.

There was a great deal of preparation for the Genocide

Awareness week activities, April 19-23.

There will be a picnic on Saturday, May 8, at the Park View area of Woodward Park starting at 11:00 am, with lunch beginning at noon. There will be volleyball, badminton, soccer, tavloo, catchphrase, food, and more.

Keep in touch with ASO by attending upcoming meetings, contacting the President of ASO, or by calling the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669 for more information on the events as the details develop.

Terian Gives Talk on Less-Known Victims of 1915

ARMEN MELIDONIAN
STAFF WRITER

Kazan Visiting Professor Dr. Abraham Terian gave his final lecture of the semester at Fresno State, titled "The Less-Known Victims of the Armenian Genocide," at 7:30PM on Thursday, April 29, in the University Business Center, Room 191.

Among those victims were numerous Armenian writers who were tortured during the Genocide and failed to produce works afterward. Indra, the pen name of Diran Chrakian, was a mystic writer of prose and poetry; the best known of the genre at the start of the twentieth century. As a result of his witnessing the Genocide, he never wrote again. He was murdered by the Turkish government in 1921.

Komitas Vardapet was a notable composer who was arrested on April 24, 1915 and after surviving deprivation, suffered from schizophrenia after witnessing the horrors of the Genocide. He was never again able to compose or to conduct any further scholarly research in his field of music.

Many distinguished and highly educated clergy died during the Genocide. The demise of the most prominent Armenian seminary of Armash is notable because it was reform oriented. Many of the seminary's most prominent graduates were killed in the Genocide, and so the Armenian Church lost the possibility of reform.

TERIAN, FROM PAGE 1

atmosphere of sheer tension and pressure, among the arrested Ottoman Armenian intellectuals and leaders who anticipated the worst in the detention centers.

Armenian Golgotha follows their experiences on their way to the interior, where gendarmes who intended to kill them intercepted the group. The deaths are recounted in detail by Bishop Balakian and remain to this day a dark, but very illuminating account of the tragedies suffered.

Dr. Terian recounted this memoir, and asked "What does he [Bishop Balakian] have to say as a religious man and spiritual leader? To understand these events through the eyes of such an individual is to gain insight into an event that few survived and few could handle in the years following."

Dr. Terian pointed out that writers in the East and West differed greatly in their responses to the Genocide. In the Soviet Union, leaders emphasized that once a people were under the Soviet blanket, they should forget all past grievances and look to the future. As such, there wasn't a lot of literature produced directly on the Genocide after 1920.

"Under communism, it was a taboo to speak of Genocide or to write of it," stated Dr. Terian.

A few writers though did stand out, such as Raphael Patkanian who penned the poem "My Arax," and Levon Avedissian's "I've

Dr. Terian also discussed the fate of the Armenian churches in Turkey, many of which were deliberately destroyed after being abandoned, with the destruction continuing long after World War I.

Dr. Terian discussed how Western Armenian language, literature, and culture suffered as well, ever since the Western Armenians were exiled from their homeland. If no Genocide had occurred, the culture would have continued to thrive, but now, with the Armenians in the Diaspora living in foreign lands, there is a trend to be satisfied with only symbolic tokens of their historic culture.

The forced conversion of many Armenians to Islam received much attention in Dr. Terian's lecture. There is little doubt that Armenians who became Muslim at the time were converted involuntarily. This is expressed by a distinction in the way Christian Armenians would refer to them: not as "Islamats'ats Hyer," but "Islamats'vats Hyer." This implies that these Armenians did not choose to become Muslim by free will but were forced to convert. Even though these Armenians converted, they are still stigmatized in Turkey to this day. Dr. Terian compared this to the situation of the Kurds in Turkey, who are predominantly Muslim in an overwhelmingly Muslim Turkey, but are still a stigmatized group because they are not ethnically Turkish. Paradoxically, he pointed to historical sources studied by Dr.

Cried it All." A lasting symbol for the Eastern Armenians was, and remains today, the great Mount Ararat. A strong symbol, only comparable to the Jewish people's Zion, our Mount Ararat has evoked feelings of irony and injustice post-Genocide as it lies just inside of Turkey. A beautiful symbol of Armenian heritage, it has been in sight, yet just out of reach.

Early responses in literature to the Genocide were not typically in poetic or artistic form. Interestingly, it was in the last half of the twentieth century and in recent years that the topic of the Genocide and events of World War I have taken an artistic turn.

Dr. Terian's lecture was an important look into the literary aspects of the Genocide. Dr. Sergio La Porta concluded the evening with some observations, focusing on the Turkish response, and declared that now we are seeing more and more Turkish writers turning to Armenian themes.

The literature, memoirs and poems alike, all gave an encompassing look at the sheer brutality, discrimination, and death that the Ottoman Armenians faced in World War I. This all serves to educate the public and will, with the recent new push to recognize the Genocide in the United States and European nations, aid in getting justice for those Armenians and Ottoman Christians who were killed.

Speros Vryonis in his book *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century*, that compel one to conclude that more than half of those who claim to be Turks today are not of ethnic Turkic descent.

AKÇAM, FROM PAGE 1

discussed."

The battle for Armenian Genocide recognition will be fought in the next few years in Turkish civil society. The political push for Genocide recognition will also continue, and one day when that has been achieved true reconciliation can begin.

"The Genocide was a tremendous loss, not only for Armenians but also for all humanity. And therefore, not only as Turks or as Armenians, but as human beings, we must struggle together so that such a crime against humanity is never repeated."

Dr. Akçam's words will resonate with a larger audience, leading to a brighter future, in which denial has been defeated and truth will win the day.

The Genocide commemoration was organized by the Armenian Inter-Communal Committee for the Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

Thank You

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ASO member Leslie Santikian speaking at the April 24 Genocide event.

SCAR CONSCIOUS

for 1.5 million Armenians systematically massacred by the Ottoman Turks from 1915-1923, a genocide unrecognized by the U.S. government

What is this wicked dream that bleeds down
rivers, and kicks like the babies sliced
from the guts of mothers?

All my life this word-Genocide,
that wets the tears of grandmothers,
that slashes the aorta of spirit with its bayonet fingers,
genocide that fills the lungs with ash and soot,
the residue of identity, genocide
that dressed young Vartan as a girl
when the Turks came to chain all the men,
kicking them into churches,
torches thrown through tall kaleidoscope windows,
bronze Armenian flesh welting,
screaming mesh of body and soul nightmare.

Genocide is Panos freezing for days, hiding
in the ice of Lake Van, image of his mother and sisters
raped and butchered.

It is Ani and Armenuhi wrapped tightly
in the center of elaborate rolled carpets
concentrating not to breathe,
a blend of unfamiliar words, ugly sounds,
muffled shouts and gunfire,
4,000 years of solid history desecrated,
a concerned German nurse documenting fields of decayed bodies
with his camera, only managing to smuggle one film
canister
in his belt back to Germany.

This is the genocide,
before the Holocaust,
before Cambodia,
before Bosnia,
before Rwanda,
before Darfur,

My genocide-
that stings when I touch it,
which sings in secret,
foaming at the mouth
like a mad,
rabid wolf.

Too many scars linger from beneath
the greyest aberrations of the soul,
inside the same skin that keeps the blood warm,
distortions etched with the pain of humanity failing,
Armenia,
1915.

Some politicians are ready to finally call it "genocide,"
perhaps casually over breakfast,
sunny side up and over-easy.

It is the presidents that shy from the word,
they are afraid of its truth,
they don't like the connotations,
their tongues surely to dissolve
like a million and a half Armenians into
a lost crease of history.

Paul Magarity, April 13, 2009

THE CIRCUS SHOW

MAY 2010

THE ART OF
FRESNO ARMENIAN-AMERICAN ARTIST
VARAZ SAMUELIAN

ARTHOP

MAY 6, 2010

Reception 5-8 pm

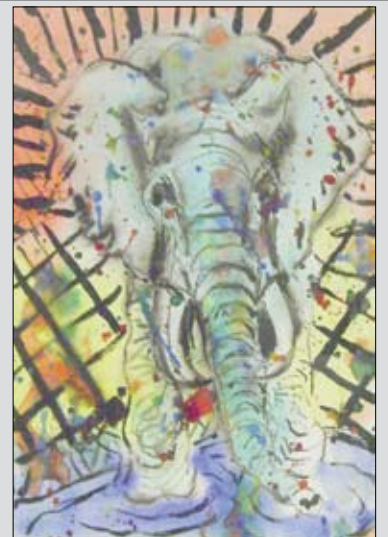
Special Introduction at 6 pm
by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian,

Armenian Studies Program

Fresno City Hall, Second Floor

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Free Admission



VARAZ'S BOOK

WILLIE AND VARAZ: MEMORIES OF
MY FRIEND WILLIAM SAROYAN
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VARAZ WILL BE ON SALE AT THE
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Garabedian and Kooyumjian Foundations Support ASP

The Armenian Studies Program wishes to express its appreciation to two foundations for making generous contributions to the Program during the year.

For the fifteenth consecutive year, the Bertha and John Garabedian Charitable Foundation has awarded Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian and the Armenian Studies Program a grant for scholarships and ongoing projects. This year's grant was for \$5,000.

John Garabedian (1909-1992) was a generous patron of the Armenian Studies Program back in the 1980s. Dr. Kouymjian, then Director of the Program, visited him on his farm several times, and Mr. Garabedian returned the visits to the campus. During the fund drive for the Haig and Isabel Berberian Endowed Chair in Armenian Studies, John Garabedian pledged \$100,000, half of which he contributed before his death. A special plaque commemorating the gift can be viewed on the third floor of the Leon S. Peters Business Building, which houses the Center for Armenian Studies and the Program offices.

Thanks to the Garabedian Grant, dozens of students have benefited over the years from special research grants and scholarships.

The Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation made a new and generous donation of \$17,800 to the Armenian Studies Program. The Foundations' gift will be used for a variety of purposes by the Armenian Studies Program and the Center for Armenian Studies. The Armenian Studies Program thanks the Kooyumjian Foundation for their generosity.

ASP 2009-2010 Scholarships

Nerces and Ruth Azadian Memorial Scholarship

Nayiri Moumdjian, Fresno, Bus. Ad-Management

Krikor and Mary Bedoian Memorial Scholarship

Brooke Bedrosian, Fresno, Mass Comm

Norma and Bob Der Mugrdechian Scholarship

Pateel Mekhitarian, Fresno, Chemistry

Bertha and John Garabedian Scholarship

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ASP Banquet, From Page 1

Prof. Der Mugrdechian then introduced Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. William Covino, who is completing his first year of service at Fresno State.

"There are as you know, thousands of institutions of higher learning across the United States and around the world, some of them good and some of them not so good and some of them great. And to my mind, what distinguishes a great university, and Fresno State is a great university, is its commitments, the things it is dedicated to, and what it values. It must value student success, it must value scholarship, the dedication for the cutting edge of our disciplines, our engagement with the region and with the community, and the globe, and it must gather a community that becomes partners with it as private supporters. In all of these areas, Fresno State is great," stated the Provost.

"The Armenian Studies Program is strong in all of the areas that I have recited. In student success, in scholarship, in engagement with the community, and it has benefited so immeasurably from private support. It has benefited from the gifts over the years that have made it a real gem in the College of Arts and Humanities, a gem in the community, and a program that is so appreciated and so excited for our students. For that, I am very grateful to here at very Fresno State. I am grateful to you, and am delighted to be with here tonight."

Next on the Program was the presentation and acknowledgement of Armenian Studies Program scholarship recipients for the 2009-2010 academic year. This year more than \$70,000 in scholarship funds were distributed. More than forty students at the Banquet were individually named and invited to the front to receive a certificate of recognition. Half way through, the students had started wrapping around the corner of the room and lining up against a side wall. "Getting an award was exciting," recounts Susie Boyadjian. "It was also great seeing all the other awardees."

The guests agreed it was a moving sight. "Each year more and more students are attending



Provost William Covino

Photo: Joseph Vasquez

the Banquet, giving them the opportunity to meet with community members," explained Professor Der Mugrdechian. "It was a wonderful way for Provost William Covino to see our Program first-hand." The pride of the community could be felt from the boom of the thunderous applause as the last student received their recognition.

The Armenian Studies

Program had the means to finance and support more than sixty students with scholarships. There are thirteen scholarships endowments and grants serving the needs of the students.

Following the presentation of the scholarship recipients, the attendees turned their attention to the big screen to view the United States premiere of the film "Saroyan's Will." Graced by the presence of the director, Grigor Harutyunyan, guests were able to hear the director's motives and perspectives on the making of the film. The film explored the less familiar part of Saroyan's life through interviews with close family friends and relatives.

Ann Arpy Soghomonian recipient of a Yervant, Rose, and Hovannes Levonian Educational scholarship remarked, "The movie was very interesting and eye opening. We were able to see the social aspect of Saroyan's life."

The Annual Armenian Studies Banquet was a great success, with everyone looking forward to next year's event.

ASP 22nd Annual Banquet Donors

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Special thanks to Ali Peyvandi, Assistant Manager of Fort Washington Golf & Country Club.

Thanks to Mike Missakian for donating the wine.

Thanks to Lucy Eryisian and Ali Peyvandi for general support.

Varaz Sculpture Garden Established at Keyan Armenian Community School Through ASP Loan



Keyan Armenian School Principal Sophie Mekhitarian, right, with Sharon Toroian Esguerra.

The Armenian Studies Program has made a permanent loan of several Varaz Samuelian sculptures to the Keyan Armenian Community School. These have been placed in a sculpture garden near the entrance of the school on Villa Ave.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

APRIL 24, FROM PAGE 1

families, reading a translation of the song Dele Yaman, while students held photographs of those who had survived the Genocide.

Dr. Sergio La Porta and Professor Barlow Der Mugrdchian of the Armenian Studies Program concluded the Program with their remarks. Students and members of the audience were asked to place carnations at the base of the model of the Martyr's Monument, to honoring those who had been killed.



Photo: Alain Ekmaitian

Keyan Armenian Community School students.



Armen Melidonian, left, and Tamar Karkazian.

Although this concluded the week long activities for Genocide remembrance at Fresno State, a flag raising at City Hall and a community commemoration were planned for Saturday, April 24.

During the week of April 19, the students had a table in the Free Speech area on campus, distributing candy with informational messages about the Genocide. The ASO had also set up poster-boards and also distributed brochures. "We hoped that by passing out candy and brochures, that we could spread the message of the Genocide to other students who may not have had any previous knowledge of it," said student Heidi Lea.

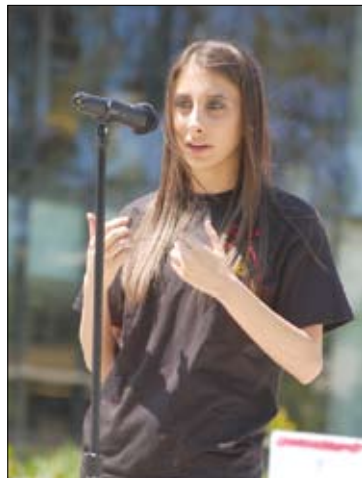
One poster in particular emphasized all the genocides around the world. "We wanted to put the issue of international recognition of genocide into perspective," said ASO treasurer Armen Melidonian. "If the international community took the effort to recognize at least the Armenian Genocide then we



Fresno City Councilman Andreas Borgeas.

will have made an important step toward the prevention of other genocides in the future."

To further enhance awareness the ASO designed and ordered t-shirts that emphasized the 95th anniversary of the Genocide. "We wanted the t-shirts so that



ASO Vice President Vartush Mesropyan expressed her feelings to the crowd in Armenian.

people could wear them and feel a sense of pride," stated President Faten Kassabian-Myaznih. The community responded, as the ASO sold more than 80 shirts, to students and also to Armenians all over California, ranging from San Francisco to Turlock.



Keynote speaker Fresno City Councilman Andreas Borgeas, right, presenting a letter of recognition to the Armenian Students Organization President, Faten Kassabian, and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Photos: Erica Magarian

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Opinion-April 24 Resolution: A Matter of Conscience

ARMEN MELIDONIAN

STAFF WRITER

A resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide recently narrowly passed the United States Foreign Affairs Committee, just as in 2005 and 2007, but its fate in reaching a floor vote in Congress is uncertain. An American President, in an effort to please Turkish officials, has once again avoided using the word "Genocide" to describe the events that befell the Armenians in 1915: a campaign of race extermination.

Putting recognition of a historical event to a vote in government does not determine history so much as it determines a nation's consistency with understanding and acknowledging it. Each time Armenian Genocide resolutions have been brought before Congress, we see the character of politicians. Today, practically all House Representatives who have voiced their stance acknowledge that the Genocide occurred, but a sizeable amount will not vote for a resolution acknowledging it. The possibility of Turkey cutting off American access to a Turkish air base that the United States has been using in its wars in the Middle East and the progress of Turkey's recent protocols for normalization with Armenia, that includes a "historical commission" between Turkey and Armenia, have been cited by numerous Congressmen as reasons enough not to pass resolutions condemning the Genocide, but these are excuses, not reasons. As the war in the Middle East winds down and when Turkey's insistence of establishing unfavorable preconditions for Armenia with the protocols fails, passing the resolutions is fair game.

Additionally, Turkish lobbying to keep American presidents from using the word "genocide" is short-sighted. They know it's said behind their backs, but only when it's said in front of their face do they react. With the Committee resolution passing on March 4 and Sweden's Parliament passing their resolution a week later, Turkey promptly recalled its ambassadors to the two countries. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said he could have 100,000 migrant Armenians deported, and Turkish Foreign Minister Davutoglu threatened that "all options are on the table." They were returned to the United States and Sweden after one month and one week respectively, once there were "signs" that the countries' governments respect Turkish interests. Incredible! When a similar resolution passed in 2007, the Turkish ambassador to the United States was gone for a week.

All that happened to please Turkey was the administrative arms of the American and Swedish governments soon condemned the passing of the respective resolutions, and when Obama avoided using the word "Genocide" this past April 24, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan stated that the President respected Turkey's "sensitivities." It's apparently no matter to them that American citizens are being more and more accurately informed of the Genocide or that Turkey's officially sanctioned academic defense of the events of 1915 are repeatedly shown to be false.

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan may have succeeded in winning the respect of these administrations, but not in winning the hearts of their nations' populaces. The political battleground is a losing war for denial of the Armenian Genocide.

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Raffi Haddad	Valencia
Chuck & Joanne Iknoian	Fresno
Paul Jamushian	Fresno
Larry Robert Krikorian	Fresno
Rosemary Matossian	Benicia
Mitchelle & Frances Mekjian	Lake Balboa
Roxie Moradian	Fresno
Hratch C. Mugar	Camarillo
Ellen M. Ohan	Walnut Creek
Harvey Nalbandian	San Francisco
Richard Papazian	Staten Island, NY
Kathy & Basil Perch	Visalia
Joanne A. Peterson	Brookline, MA
Leo & Marlene Pilibosian	Fresno
Chuck & Debbie Poochigian	Fresno
Sam & Mary Sommese	Chicago, IL
S. M. Terzian	Reno NV
R.F. Topalian	Pasadena
Kirk & Kathy Yergat	Fresno